

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

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EB-08 FRB-03 XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 /110 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0310

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRAZZAVILLE 0288

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, CF

SUBJECT: ANNIVERSARY OF NGOUABI ASSASSINATION

1. MARCH 18 ANNIVERSARY OF NGOUABI ASSASSINATION WAS DECLARED A "DAY OF SUPREME SACRIFICE." WHILE CONGOLESE MILITARY AND SECURITY PERSONNEL WERE HYPERACTIVE DURING DAYS BEFORE AND MARCH 18 ITSELF, AND MIDNIGHT CURFEW HAS NOT YET BEEN LIFTED, CEREMONIES ATTENDANT TO THE OCCASION, WHILE SOLEMN, DID HAVE MOMENTS OF LEVITY:

2. REPRESENTATIVE OF WORLD PEACE COUNCIL, WHO AWARDED YHOMBY-OPANGO THE JOLIOT-CURIE MEDAL, GAVE LITTLE INDICATION IN HIS ADDRESS TO THROGS AT TOWN HALL OF HAVING ANY IDEA OF WHERE HE WAS OR WHAT THE OCCASION MIGHT BE. TO THE DISMAY OF THE CROWD AND THE MILITARY COMMITTEE, THE SPEAKER, AN ITALIAN, REPEATEDLY CALLED THIS THE CONGA, AND LAMENTED LOSS OF PRESIDENT GOOBY (SIC). HE ALSO ADVANCED STANDARD SOVIET LINE ON DISARMAMENT, INCLUDING CALL FOR BAN OF NEUTRON BOMB. CONGOLESE BANDS KEPT BREAKING IN AT INAPPROPRIATE OCCASIONS WITH MUSIC, MOMENT OF SILENCE AT NGOUABI'S TOMB WAS ANYTHING BUT SILENT WITH
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THE WIRING OF HELICOPTER ABOVE, AND GOOD DEAN OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS, NORTH KOREAN, FORGOT TO BRING ALONG WREATH OF PLASTIC FLOWERS TO PLACE ON NGOUABI'S TOMB IN NAME OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS. (FOR HIS SIN, CONGOLESE MADE HIM GO ALONE SUNDAY MORNING TO LAY WREATH.)

3. WITH IT ALL, HOWEVER, MOOD IN BRAZZAVILLE NOW IS VERY

REMINISCENT OF THAT OF EARLY NOVEMBER 1977. THE COUNTRY SEEMS TO BE FLOATING RATHER AIMLESSLY, WITHOUT ANY GREAT REFERENCE FOR PRESENT LEADERSHIP, OR AMONG MASSES, FOR MEMORY OF NGOUABI, DESPITE HIS FREQUENT DESCRIPTION AS A GREAT MAN OF THE 20TH CENTURY. SOME CONGOLESE HAD TOLD US THAT CABINET CHANGES MIGHT OCCUR, DEPENDING ON RESULTS OF FRENCH ELECTIONS, BUT WITH CENTER'S RETURN TO POWER IN PARIS, LITTLE EXCUSE NOW EXISTS TO HANG CHANGE ON.

4. THE ECONOMY IS IN BAD SHAPE, WITH CONGOLESE SEEKING A MEETING OF GROUP OF PARIS TO ESTABLISH A MORATORIUM ON DEBT REPAYMENT FRENCH ARE VERY GLOOMY OVER OUTLOOK HERE, BUT IT MAY BE JUST THE HEAT SINCE FRG, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS SENDING A NUMBER OF LONG TERM EXPERTS TO ASSIST IN CONGOLESE AGRICULTURE.

5. VISITING DELEGATIONS FROM SOVIET UNION AND AAPSO FOR NGOUABI ANNIVERSARY EVOKED LITTLE ENTHUSIASM, AND BANNERS AROUND TOWN SHOWED CONSIDERABLE LESS PASSION THAN THOSE IN PAST. EVEN SYMPATHY FOR ARAB CAUSE MAY BE WANING: FILM OF THE WEEK AT LOCAL THEATERS IS "RAID ON ENTEBBE."
KATZEN

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